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ABSTRACT

Starting with the ninth grade, Hawaiian students are given the opportunity to take the Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies (HSTEC) to demonstrate mastery of 14 Essential Competencies. These competencies are grouped into those covering the Basic Skills area and those covering the Other Life Skills area (e.g., distinguishing fact from fiction). Scores are reported by each Skill area and each Essential Competency. A student must correctly answer 28 of the Basic Skills questions and 33 of the Other Life Skills questions to demonstrate mastery of the 14 Essential Competencies. If mastery is not demonstrated on any one Skill area, the entire test must be retaken. Individual Competency scores are reported to assist the teacher in evaluating areas of weakness that must be attended to for the individual student. Administering the HSTEC to ninth grade students provides an additional year in which to utilize instructional strategies designed to assist students who might be most in need of the additonal time. It also provides an additional opportunity for the student to demonstrate mastery. A sample HSTEC individual report is presented and an interpretation is briefly discussed. (PN)

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Graduation Requirements and The Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies (H.S.T.E.C.)

Effective for the Class of 1983

On August 17, 1978, the Board of Education approved expanded course and credit requirements, as well as the necessity for the demonstration of mastery of essential competencies, effective with the graduating class of 1983. (BOE Regulations #4540.1, revised 8/78)

The following is designed to acquaint you with one means of demonstrating mastery of the essential competencies. If you have any questions please see your school counselor or principal.

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Dr. Donnis H. Thompson, Superintendent

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The Honorable George R. Ariyoshi
Governor, State of Hawaii

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THE HAWAII STATE TEST OF ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES (HSTEC)

Beginning in 1983, graduating seniors will be required to demonstrate mastery of the 15 Essential Competencies which are listed at the end of this pamphlet. One means by which students can demonstrate mastery of 14 of these Essential Competencies is through passing the Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies or HSTEC. The remaining Essential Competency will be tested using a teacher assessment system. This system is under development.

Starting with 9th grade, students will be given an opportunity to take the HSTEC. In the event they do not demonstrate mastery of the Essential Competencies on their first try, students will be allowed to retake the HSTEC in following grades or they will be counseled to take one of the alternative modes of demonstrating mastery. Contact your school principal for more information on these alternatives.

There are two forms of the HSTEC, both of equal levels of difficulty. Different forms are necessary since they allow us to give students who did not successfully demonstrate mastery one year a different form of the test the following year. Both forms consist of 108 multiple choice questions. A sample of a typical multiple choice question is shown below.

Which island has the largest population?

(A) Hawaii
(B) Lanai
(C) Maui
(D) Oahu

A	B	C	D
○	○	○	●

"D" is the correct answer

HSTEC SCORES AND THEIR USES

The Essential Competencies are grouped into those covering the Basic Skills area and those covering the Other Life Skills area (see listing of Competencies). Scores are reported by each Skill area and each Essential Competency. Success on the HSTEC is determined solely by the scores on each Skill. Each student must correctly answer 28 of the questions dealing with Basic Skills and 33 of the questions dealing with Other Life Skills in order to demonstrate mastery of the 14 Essential Competencies tested by HSTEC. The student must retake the entire test if (s)he does not demonstrate mastery on any one Skill area.

While Skill area scores are used to evaluate whether or not each student has successfully demonstrated overall mastery of the Essential Competencies tested by HSTEC, individual Competency scores are reported in order to assist the teacher in evaluating areas of weakness that must be attended to for the individual student.

By noting each student's weaknesses and strengths, the teacher can provide more specialized programs tailored to that student's needs. Administering HSTEC to 9th grade students provides an additional year in which to utilize instructional strategies designed to assist students who perhaps need the additional time most. It also provides an additional opportunity for the student to demonstrate mastery.

Skill area scores cannot be arrived at by adding Competency scores. Some questions measure more than one Competency. Thus, some questions are counted more than once in arriving at the Competency scores. The brief example below shows this in detail.

EXAMPLE 1

	Skill Measured		Competency Measured		
Test Question	A	B	1	2	3
#1	X		X		X
#2	X		X	X	
#3		X	X		
#4		X		X	
#5		X			X
	2	3	3	2	2

If a student answers all five questions correctly then the total in Skill A and Skill B is 5 (2 + 3 = 5). If you were to total the Competency scores you would obtain 7 (3 + 2 + 2 = 7).

HSTEC REPORT INTERPRETATION

In the sample HSTEC individual report shown below, "John" had Basic Skills and Other Life Skills scores of 28 and 42 respectively and has, therefore, successfully demonstrated mastery of the 14 Essential Competencies. If he had not been successful, a "*" would have been printed by the appropriate Skill score. It also shows that he got 4 of 9 items correct for Competency 1, 5 of 7 correct for Competency 2 and so forth.

HAWAII STATE TEST OF ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES - FORM 1
INDIVIDUAL REPORT FOR
JOHN

SCHOOL: MAIN
GRADE : 9 SECTION: 01

TOTAL SCORE	BASIC SKILLS	OTHER LIFE SKILLS
70	28	42

BASIC SKILLS : COMPETENCIES 1-6

OTHER LIFE SKILLS:
COMPETENCIES 7-14

COMPETENCIES/	NUMBER OF ITEMS 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1/					0					+					
2/						0		+							
3/							0			+					
4/						0					+				
5/						0				+					
6/					0					+					
7/						0			+						
8/								0		+					
9/									0	+					
10/					0					+					
11/							0			+					
12/								0		+					
13/				0						+					
14/					0				+						

NOTE: 0=NUMBER OF CORRECT ITEMS
+=HIGHEST POSSIBLE
#=ALL CORRECT

*=NEEDS ASSISTANCE

SUMMARY

We urge you to go over the list of Essential Competencies with your children and if possible begin to provide situations in which they can demonstrate these competencies. You will be providing additional support to what they learn in school.

We hope this has provided you with sufficient basic information about the HSTEC and what can be expected in terms of its content and reporting system.

HERE ARE SOME SAMPLE QUESTIONS FROM A TYPICAL MINIMUM COMPETENCY TEST.

Questions 1 and 2 refer to the following advertisement:

Firm Vine Ripened	
TOMATOES	per lb. ---- 39¢
New Crop Sweet	
POTATOES	4 lb. for ---- 88¢
Small Fancy	
CUCUMBERS	5 for ---- 39 ¢

Questions

1. What is the price per pound for sweet potatoes?

   A. $0.22
   B. $0.39
   C. $0.88
   D. $3.52

   1Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ

2. If you buy two pounds of tomatoes, 10 cucumbers and four pounds of sweet potatoes, your bill will be:

   A. $1.56
   B. $1.66
   C. $2.05
   D. $2.44

   2Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ

3. Select the phrase which best completes the sentence below:

   I would like _____ you know how very pleased I have been with the service that I have received at your gas station.

   A. two let
   B. to let
   C. tow let
   D. NO PHRASE IS NECESSARY

   3Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ

4. The sign shown below means:

   A. Smoking permitted
   B. Smoking not permitted
   C. Cigarettes not sold here
   D. Fire hazard

   4Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ

[Correct answers are 1 - A, 2 - D, 3 - B, and 4 - B]

ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES FOR GRADUATION

	HSTEC COMPETENCY NUMBER
BASIC SKILLS	
Read and use printed materials from daily life. These include the newspaper, telephone book, road maps, charts and graphs commonly used in public media, and household product instructions.	1
Complete commonly used forms. These include personal checks, job applications, charge account applications and other similar forms.	2
Demonstrate writing skills commonly used in daily life. These include writing directions, telephone messages, letters of inquiry or complaint, and personal correspondence.	3
Communicate orally in situations common to every day life. These include giving simple directions and answering questions about directions or instructions, expressing personal opinions on a topic and responding to questions about the topic, and describing an object.	NOT TESTED
Use computational skills in situations common to everyday life. These include adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers, adding and subtracting dollars and cents, and computing discount and simple interest.	4
Read and use scales on standard measuring devices. These include rulers, measuring cups and spoons, thermometers and weight scales.	5
Interpret common visual symbols. These include traffic signs and road markings, directions to public facilities, and caution and warning labels and signs.	6
OTHER LIFE SKILLS	
Reach reasoned solutions to commonly encountered problems. Reasoned solutions are those that incorporate the facts at hand, the constraints on the solution, the feasibility of carrying out the solution, and the values of those affected by the solution. Commonly encountered problems include decisions about family finance, career plans, physical health, and community issues.	7
Distinguish fact from opinion in TV and radio news broadcasts, advertising, newspaper and magazine articles, and public speeches.	8
Use resources for independent learning. These resources include the library, informed persons, and public and private agencies.	9
Identify the harmful effects of smoking, drinking, drug abuse, overeating, insufficient sleep, poor personal hygiene, and poor nutrition.	10
Identify the training, skill and background requirements of at least one occupation in which the student is interested.	11
Demonstrate knowledge of the basic structure and functions of national, state and local governments.	12
Demonstrate knowledge of the citizen's opportunities to participate in political processes. These include voting, running for office, contacting elected representatives, and participating in election campaigns.	13
Demonstrate knowledge of important citizen rights and responsibilities. This includes the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and knowledge of traffic laws and major criminal offenses.	14